

Message Text

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ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-01 HA-05 L-03 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 DODE-00 PA-01
USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12
NEA-10 SS-15 IO-13 /125 W
-----011813 302117Z /70

R 301729Z NOV 77

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3417

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ICFTU, ILO, ELAB

SUBJ: ICFTU EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING NOVEMBER 23-255

KERSTEN BRIEFING

REF: BRUSSELS 17124

1. OTTO KERSTEN, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU), MET WITH SEVEN BRUSSELS-BASED LABOR ATTACHES NOV. 29 TO BRIEF THEM ON ICFTU DEVELOPMENTS, PARTICULARLY THE NOVEMBER 23-25 ICFTU EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING IN BRUSSELS.

2. THE BRIEFING PROVIDED ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON POINTS COVERED IN REFTEL REPORTING ON KERSTEN'S NOVEMBER 23 PRESS BRIEFING:

(A) SOUTH AFRICA. THE ICFTU CAMPAIGN WILL FEATURE A WEEK OF ANTI-APARTHEID ACTIVITIES BY ICFTU AFFILIATES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD IN MARCH 1978, BUT THE WEEK HAS NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED BECAUSE "WHAT WE WANT TO AVOID IS ALLOWING OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO RIDE ON OUR COATTAILS" BY PUBLICIZING THE EVENT AS THEIR ACTIVITY. (COMMENT: THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORLD FEDERATION OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TRADE UNIONS EARLY THIS YEAR TOOK CREDIT FOR A SIMILAR CAMPAIGN CONDUCTED BY THE ICFTU IN JANUARY, AND DESPITE ICFTU PRECAUTIONS WILL PROBABLY TRY TO DO SO AGAIN. (END COMMENT.)

(B) LATIN AMERICA. THE PARAGUAYAN ICFTU AFFILIATE, THE CPT, WAS SUSPENDED BECAUSE IT IS A "PUPPET ORGANIZATION OF THE REGIME" AND NOT AN AUTHENTIC TRADE UNION, KERSTEN SAID. THE ICFTU SECRETARIAT IS ALSO STUDYING THE TRADE UNION CREDENTIALS OF ITS AFFILIATES IN URUGUAY AND GUATEMALA, AND THE ICFTU LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION, ORIT, WILL DO SO AT ITS EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING IN LOS ANGELES IN EARLY DECEMBER. "WE ARE LISTENING TO THEM (ORIT)," SAID KERSTEN, "BECAUSE WE DON'T - WANT TO TAKE ACTION ON INFORMATION COMING JUST FROM ONE SOURCE."

(C) MIDDLE EAST. KERSTEN PLANS TO ACCEPT AN INVITATION FROM THE EGYPTIAN LABOR MOVEMENT TO VISIT CAIRO IN THE NEAR FUTURE, PROBABLY JANUARY.

(D) AFRICA. THE WINDS IN AFRICA SEEM TO BE SHIFTING

SLIGHTLY IN THE ICFTU'S FAVOR: SOME AFFILIATES THAT LEFT THE ICFTU IN THE PAST TEN YEARS ARE THINKING OF RETURNING AND MAY BE ALLOWED TO DO SO BY THEIR GOVERNMENTS. KERSTEN CITED THE SENEGAL CNTS AS ONE, AND SAID THAT ON A VISIT TO DAKAR JANUARY 4-5, HE WILL MEET PRESIDENT SENGHOR, WHO IS VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL. ACCORDING TO KERSTEN, HE WILL TELL SENGHOR THAT AS A TOP OFFICIAL IN THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL, SENGHOR SHOULD ALSO ALLOW SENEGALESE TRADE UNIONISTS TO PLAY A ROLE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE.

(E) ILO. "WE WANT TO FIND SOME WAY," KERSTEN SAID, "TO PASS THE REPORT ON THE APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS," WHICH WAS REJECTED (LARGELY BECAUSE OF ABSTENSIONS) AT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE JUNE 1977 ILO CONFERENCE. AMONG ILO REFORMS BEING

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CONSIDERED, ACCORDING TO KERSTEN, ARE ADOPTION OF A SECRET BALLOT PROCEDURE FOR CONFERENCE VOTING AND MODIFICATION OF CONFERENCE QUORUM RULES, WHICH GIVE UNDUE WEIGHT TO ABSTENSIONS. (WE UNDERSTAND THAT ANOTHER PROPOSED REFORM IS TO HAVE LABOR, MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES SEATED WITH THEIR OWN GROUPS AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE, IN ORDER TO WEAKEN THE HOLD GOVERNMENTS HAVE ON DELEGATIONS, WHICH ARE NOW SEATED BY COUNTRY.) KERSTEN HOPES TO DISCUSS THESE IDEAS WITH AFL-CIO LEADERS AT THE AFL-CIO CONGRESS NEXT MONTH.

3. OTHER LABOR MATTERS COVERED BY KERSTEN:

(A) WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR. "WE HAVE DECIDED TO PLAY IT COOL WITH THE WCL," KERSTEN SAID. "I WILL NEVER USE A PLATFORM OFFERED BY THE WCL TO MEET WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, PARTICULARLY SINCE SOME OF THE PEOPLE THEY PROPOSED TO CONTACT ARE NOT BONA FIDE TRADE UNIONISTS." KERSTEN WAS THUS REJECTING WCL PROPOSALS TO CONFER WITH VARIOUS LABOR INTERNATIONALS ABOUT THE "RENEWAL" OF THE WORLD LABOR MOVEMENT (BRUSSELS 14844, NOTAL).

(B) JAPAN. KERSTEN WILL GO TO TOKYO IN MID-DECEMBER TO TAKE PART IN A SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL MEETING

DECEMBER 16-18. ON DECEMBER 19 KERSTEN WILL PARTICIPATE
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IN ANOTHER TOKYO MEETING THAT WILL INCLUDE REPRESENTA-
TIVES OF ICFTU AFFILIATES AND (HOPEFULLY) SOME UNAFFILIATED
UNIONS IN SOHYO.

(C) NEXT BOARD MEETING AND NEXT CONGRESS. ICFTU
EXECUTIVE BOARD WILL HOLD ITS NEXT SEMIANNUAL MEETING IN
BRUSSELS MAY 16-19. AMONG THE ITEMS TO BE DECIDED THEN
IS THE SITE OF THE 1979 ICFTU CONGRESS. AT NOVEMBER
BOARD MEETING THE SPANISH UGT INVITED THE ICFTU TO HOLD THE
CONGRESS IN MADRID, AND BOARD MEMBERS APPLAUDED THE
PROPOSAL, WITHOUT FORMALLY ADOPTING IT. KERSTEN SAID
MADRID "PROBABLY" WILL BE CHOSEN. MORRIS

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